



Claims 17 to 34 have been added to better encompass the full scope and breadth of the invention notwithstanding the patentability of the original claims. Claims 17 to 22 depend from amended claim 1, claims 23 to 28 depend from amended claim 7, and claims 29 to 34 depend from amended claim 12.

Claim rejections:

The Rejection of Claims 1 to 16 Under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph, as Being Indefinite For Failing to Particularly Point Out and Distinctly Claim the Subject Matter Which Applicant Regards as the Invention

The rejection of claims 1 to 16 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention is acknowledged.

Claims 1, 7 and 12 have been amended to, inter alia, overcome this 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, rejection.

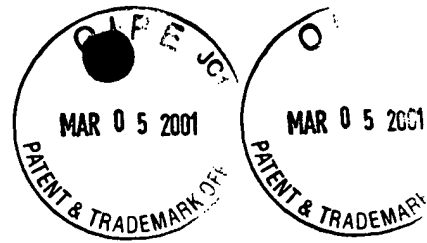
The Rejection of Claims 1 to 16 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as Being Unpatentable Over Soga et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,090,718) (the '718 Soga Patent)

The rejection of claims 1 to 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Soga et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,090,718) (the '718 Soga Patent) is acknowledged.

Independent claims 1, 7 and 12 now distinguish over the '718 Soga Patent under §103 because, inter alia: the '718 Soga Patent does not disclose the claimed limitations including the three alternate seasoning methods of (1) dummy wafer seasoning methods, (2) product wafer in-situ seasoning methods and (3) waferless seasoning methods; and further the prior art lack a suggestion that the '718 Soga Patent should be modified in a manner required to meet the claims; the Examiner has made a strained interpretation of the reference that could be made only by hindsight; and the Examiner has not presented a convincing line of reasoning as to why the claimed subject matter as a whole, including its differences over the prior art, would have been obvious.

Claims 2 to 5 and 17 to 22 to y depend from amended claim 1; claims 8 to 10 and 23 to 28 depend from amended claim 7; and claims 13 to 15 and 29 to 34 depend from amended claim 12, and are believed to distinguish over the combination for the reasons previously cited.

Therefore claims 1 to 5, 7 to 10, 12 to 15, and 17 to 34 are submitted to be allowable over the cited references and reconsideration and allowance are respectfully solicited.



CONCLUSION

In conclusion, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested. Allowance of all claims is requested. Issuance of the application is requested.

It is requested that the Examiner telephone Mr. Stephen Stanton, Esq. (#35,690) at (610) 296 - 5194 or the undersigned attorney at (845) 452 - 5863 if the Examiner has any questions or issues that may be resolved to expedite prosecution and place this Application in condition for Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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